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LBJ Is Making a List Of Likely Scapegoats In Dominican Impasse

CPYRGHT

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WASHINGTON, May 22—Presidential advisers are now looking for scapegoats to blame for the Dominican Republic mess. The fact that such a hunt is on is sufficient proof that the administration realizes the whole military intervention operation has been badly mishandled in its follow-through phases.

The effort to pin the blame elsewhere than on President Johnson has started with a rush in the last 24 hours. The first proposed candidates for the

Bissell Jr., and the then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Lyman Lemnitzer. But Mr. Kennedy at that time accepted the whole blame himself. To date the White House has shown no similar inclination.

Commentary On the News

White House doghouse have been U. S. Ambassador W. Tapley Bennett Jr.; the new CIA chief, Admiral William F. Raborn Jr., and Undersecretary of State Thomas C. Mann.

Long List Possible

It does not matter whether any of these three are actually culpable. There has to be a scapegoat list, even if, as at present, it is passed along surreptitiously by officials whose tips usually reflect the White House line.

Because the errors in judgment or misinterpretation of the Administration's program for bringing order out of chaos, involve Mr. Bennett, diplomatic, military and intelligence agencies, the list of scapegoats could be pretty long.

Certainly it could be more extensive than the roll of wrong guessers and blundering operatives in John F. Kennedy's Bay of Pigs fiasco in 1961.

Comparatively innocent high officials had to take the rap under Mr. Kennedy in 1961, such as the then CIA head Allen Dulles his deputy Richard M.

sidered more instrumental than any other adviser in the President's decision to act at once. On hemispheric affairs his views have consistently carried great weight with LBJ.

The inside administration intrigue in this scapegoat hunt has odd aspects. Some of those trying to make Ambassador Bennett the whipping boy are really after Mr. Mann. The latter is considered responsible for Mr. Bennett's being in Santo Domingo in the first place.

There is an almost hysterical effort by those in the possible line of Presidential fire to pass the buck to other agencies and individuals.

Bundy Is Blamed

Instead, Ambassador Bennett is being blamed on various vague counts: that he failed to have the right contacts in the Dominican Republic, that he overemphasized the danger to Americans in urging the President to rush the marines in on April 28.

Admiral Raborn, born of the CIA, is accused of making too emotional an appeal to the White House about the Communist threat. This charge, from administration sources that should know better, makes little sense. Admiral Raborn had just been sworn in on April 28 when Mr. Johnson ordered the marines in. The main CIA appeal for prompt action came from retiring CIA chief John McCone.

But the digs at Admiral Raborn are basically aimed at the intelligence operation he heads. The State Department and Pentagon have consistently cast aspersions on the value of CIA "evaluations."

Admiral Raborn's left-wing status as such as to have made him suspect, but it is held in intelligence circles here that the Bundy mission refused to accept this evaluation of Mr. Guzman.

On almost every aspect of the present messed-up situation, false notes have been struck here. What leaks out of the State Department, Pentagon or CIA privately has no relation to the statements issued publicly by the Administration even at the White House level.

Mann's Views Respected

Undersecretary of State Mann is caught in the scapegoat hunt mainly because he has been con-



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For example, certain high in-
telligence officials have the knife
out for McGeorge Bundy, White-
House national

security adviser. Mr. Bundy is
blamed for the
White House de-
cision to send a
special mission
on a desperation
basis to Santo
Domingo last
Saturday.

The aim was to end the fight-
ing. This mis-
sion sought unsuccessfully to
form a coalition goveinment
headed by Antonio Guzman, a
close friend of exiled President
Juan Bosch.

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Short Stay Envied

The White House again insisted
formally Friday that our troops
were in strictly a neutral posture

in the Dominican Republic. All
the evidence from the scene, in-
cluding motion pictures and
comments from our paratroop-
ers and marines themselves, in-
dicates our military is being
chummy with the junta, while
the Bundy mission has been
chummy with the rebels — at
least on certain days of the week.

The buckpassing, the lack of
official candor and all the back-
biting going on here suggest only
one thing. The President has
found himself boxed in and is
trying desperately to find a way
out. What basically went wrong?

There is no argument about
that. Mr. Johnson was led to
believe that once we put our
troops ashore the whole mess
could be cleared up in a few
days with a temporary coalition
government operating to stabil-
ize the country. Instead, this is
the fourth week of our interven-
tion, and no immediate solution
is in sight.